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ply you with choice Fresh and
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In fact everything to be found
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A Voice from the Vortex.

BY EDGAR WELTON COOLEY.
(Copyright, 1902, by Daily Story Pub. Co.)
For an hour after the dozen pupils
which the thinly populated district
furnished had gone to their homes,
Miss Blanchard sat at the west win-
dow of the little white schoolhouse
watching the evening sunlight shin-
ing upon the nodding prairie
grass that stretched like a yellow sea
for miles and miles.

It was mid-September. For a month
not a drop of moisture had fallen. In
the road that wound, a dull, gray
streak, across the plain, the dust was
ankle deep. Verdure was sere, and
lifeless, and dry. The sky was cloud-
less; the sun's heat almost intolerable.
But Miss Blanchard's thoughts were
not of the parched, glittering land-
scape nor yet of her school duties.
They were of John Mallory.

She could not remember when she
had not loved John Mallory. All their
young lives they had been sweethearts.
But at last they had quarreled—and
parted in anger.

While she still considered that he
had been unjust to her, and her eyes
snapped indignantly at the recollection
of his harsh words, she could not dull
the keen edge of regret; the dazzling
brightness of the sunshine could not
dissipate the shadow—the deep, dark-
some shadow—that seemed to wrap her
in its mantle.

With a sigh she turned from the
window and her glance rested upon
the telephone back of her desk. Dear,
thoughtful John! It was he who had
ordered the telephone placed in the
schoolhouse.

"There are so many tramps in the
country," he had said to her. "If they
bother you, little woman, or if you are
ever in need of help, ring me up."

Her heart had thrilled with affection
at the time, but now—She tossed
her head proudly. "I do not need his
assistance," she said; "I am cap-
able of taking care of myself, I think."

Again she turned to gaze across the
monotonous fields, and became con-
scious of a peculiar haze that seemed
to fill the air with increasing density.
With never a thought but that a much
needed shower was not far distant, she
watched it in idle curiosity, but pres-
ently, with sudden foreboding, she no-
ticed that heavy clouds of vapor occa-
sionally rolled over the building, borne
westward. And then, through the
open window there drifted a strong,
familiar odor—the odor of smoke.

Hurrying to the door, she pushed it
open and cast one apprehensive glance
to the eastward, then shrank back ap-
palled. The prairie was afire!

Across the eastern horizon was a
livid wall of flame, whose red tongues
seemed reaching to the very portals of
heaven. The long, parched blades of
grass, dry as tinder, were food most
tempting to the ravenous element.
The wind had increased to a gale and
already a shower of sparks was falling
within a few rods of the schoolhouse.

The nearest residence, a mile away,
was towards the east, from which the
fire was rapidly approaching. To the
westward twice that distance must be
traversed before she could reach a
habitation. She knew the plowed
fields, surrounding the dwellings, in-
sured safety to the buildings, but she
could not hope to reach any of them in
advance of this scarlet agent of de-
struction. Yet certain death awaited
her if she remained, for the school-
house was without protection of any nature.

An agony of thoughts crowded her
brain and in a frenzy of fear she
dashed into the road. Already she
could feel the heat of the fire that was
racing towards her with the speed of a
railway train. It seemed no more
than two miles away; she could hear
the ominous crackling of the dry grass
as the flames leaped forth and em-
braced the withering verdure in their
hot embrace.

The sky was hidden by a mantle of
smoke; the sun, visible only at inter-
vals, was a great, round ball of crim-
son. Before the rolling vapor fright-



Through the open window there
drifted a strong, familiar odor.

ened birds flew past in flocks; along
the dusty road, almost dashing against
her in their mad flight, droves of rab-
bits fled. To her terrified eyes the
whole world seemed ablaze. Vainly she
scanned the prairie in all directions,
hoping some one with a team would
come to her assistance, but not a hu-
man being did she see.

With a cry to God for mercy, she
sank upon the ground and covered her
face with her hands. And the blis-
tering demon of rampant flame roared
louder and still louder in her ears, and
the scarlet of its breath tinged red the
snow of her face, the ebony of her
hair.

"John! John!" she cried, in the
depths of her despair. Then, like an
inspiration, came the recollection of
the telephone.

She staggered to her feet and dashed
into the schoolhouse. The interior was
aglow with the reflections of the
flames; the air was stifling with the
smoke.

With her hand upon the receiver she
paused irresolutely, then turned her
head slightly and glanced out the win-
dow at the hurricane of death bearing
down upon her.

"No, no," she said, "I will not. No
power on earth can save me now. And
he—it would be but agony for him to
know that I am in this sea of flame
and he unable to give me aid. When
it is over—is over—it will be time
enough for him to know."

With her face illumined with a
gleam of heroic determination, she
turned away and walked slowly to the
window. And there she stood pale,
but gazing calmly out at the raging
flood of fire. The flames were only a
few feet away now and their hungry
tongues almost licked the window
panes. In despair she wrung her
hands.

"Oh, God," she cried, "I cannot die
without once more hearing the voice I



A moment later she was folded in
John Mallory's strong arms.

love, without asking to be forgiven for
the hasty, the angry words I uttered!"

Again she hastened to the telephone
and rang the bell. And when at last
she heard his familiar voice the fire
was laying greedy hands upon the
walls of the building.

"John," she said, "you are not angry
with me, are you, dear? . . . You do
not know how glad I am to hear you
say that, dear. I was afraid you held
resentment, and I— . . . Oh, no, John,
dear, it was all my fault, and I am
sorry—so sorry. . . . Where am I
now? Do you think I would be stand-
ing at the telephone if I were in the
schoolhouse? There must be fire all
around it by this time. Isn't it aw-
ful?"

She shrank for an instant before the
intense heat. The roar of the flames,
was like wall of a hurricane in a
forest.

"John—John! . . . Perhaps—per-
haps I will never see you again, dear.
But if I never do, remember that I
loved you—John—better than—"

She staggered beneath the choking
cloud of smoke. Scarlet tongues of
flame were lapping the floor almost at
her feet.

"Yes, John I am going away—far,
far away. . . . Where? . . . I can-
not tell you—now. . . . To-morrow—
to-night, perhaps. . . . you will know.
 . . . Oh, John—dear, dear John . . .
 . . . Good bye. . . . Good—"

The receiver dropped from her
nervous fingers and, blinded with
smoke and faint from the intense heat,
she reeled forward through the black-
ness. Stumbling, falling, rising again,
she reached the door, unscathed, hear-
ing the desperate ringing of the tele-
phone bell and the deafening roaring
of the flames.

Onward she staggered until she
reached the road—that one narrow
break in the wall of flame. And there
she paused and turned her flushed face
upward toward the sky in mute ap-
peal to heaven. Something fell upon
her forehead, something damp and
cool. She reached forth her hands,
palms upwards. Cooling drops of
moisture kissed the quivering flesh. It
was raining!

With a cry of joy upon her lips, she
sank upon her knees in the dust and
offered up a prayer of thanksgiving
for the shower that had come in time.

In a mighty torrent fell the rain,
and when at last the woman raised
her eyes, she saw a wide expanse of
blackened stubble, but not a spark was
glowing. Then, through the mist her
dazed eyes beheld a familiar, broad-
shouldered figure running towards her
with outstretched hands. And a mo-
ment later she was folded in John
Mallory's strong arms.

"Minnie! Thank God; oh, thank
God!" he cried.

Kissing Him Away.

A statue of George Washington
stands in front of the Sub-Treasury
building, New York city. The prac-
tice of kissing the extended great toe
of the father of his country recently
began. It is being carried on with
increased vigor.

The hour is not distant when the
father of his country will lack a great
toe. Then osculation will attack the
other toes of that foot and will con-
tinue until all are gone. Then the
toes of the other foot will be kissed
off and as the attack extends over
the effigy, it will disappear altogether,
bit by bit. Elimination of George
Washington by labial erosion ought
to be looked upon with profound ap-
prehension.

Deaths in French Army.
The French Minister of War de-
clares that the mortality of the
French army is nearly four times
that of the German army. This he
attributes, not to the inefficiency of
the French military surgeons, but to
the ravages of tuberculosis, "the mal-
ady of France," and to typhoid fever
and scarlatina.

Monument to Spanish Martyr.
Geneva has granted permission to
a number of Spanish literary and po-
litical men to erect a monument in
that city to Michael Servetus, the
Spanish theologian, who was burnt as
a unitarian heretic by order of the
magistrates of Geneva at the instiga-
tion of John Calvin. The monument
is to be unveiled next October on the
350th anniversary of the burning.

Will Not Appoint a Woman.
Mayor Schmitz of San Francisco
has refused to grant the petition of
the ladies of the California club ask-
ing the appointment of a woman on
the school board of the city. He says
that such an appointment would be
apt to create a spirit of unrest among
the school teachers, many of whom
are opposed to such an innovation.

California Fuel for Hawaii.
Hawaiian fuel has heretofore been
coal from Australia chiefly. Within
a year this will be entirely superseded
with fuel from California, with a sav-
ing of 35 to 50 per cent in cost. Con-
tracts have already been signed for the
delivery of 750,000 barrels of fuel oil
per annum to Hawaii, and within a
year the consumption will be 1,000,000
barrels per annum.

Mathematics of Love.
"Margaret," he began, "I have
\$3,750 in the bank. I own half inter-
est in a patent churn company that
clears \$1,700 a year. My salary is
\$20 a week, with prospects of a raise
to \$22 next April. I have an aunt
who will leave me twenty-seven
shares of a railway stock now quoted
at 53. Tell me, Margaret, will you be
mine?" "Wait," she replied, "till I
get a pencil." For she never had
been good at mental arithmetic.—
Newark News.

Two Voices—Double Pay.
"I understand, Mrs. Clancy," re-
marked Mrs. Dooligan over the back
fence, "that your Jimmie has had his
wages doubled for Christmas. Is that
true?" "Sure, an' it is, Mis' Dooli-
gan," replied Mrs. Clancy, proudly.
"He's no longer shiftin' the scannery
at the theater!" "I want to know!
What is his new job?" "He's playin'
the mob in the third act, Mrs. Dooli-
gan. And as his voice is changin'
th' boss gives him double pay, which
is no more than right, I'm thinkin'."—
Judge.

Senator Pettus Protests.
Senator Pettus raised a laugh while
discussing the militia bill. He had
submitted to several interruptions
with good grace, but when Foraker
kept on talking for some fifteen min-
utes the venerable senator from Ala-
bama—he is the oldest man in the
Senate—tapped his desk sharply and
said: "See here, Mr. President, I
have been trying to make this speech
for some time, and I don't want any
other Senator to make it for me,
either." Foraker looked astonished
for a moment, but took his seat amid
a general laugh.

A Man's Nose Bursts Into Flames.
A man was walking along the Boule-
vard Saint-Michel, Paris, one day re-
cently, and stopped to light a cigar-
ette. Suddenly his nose burst into
flames, which spread to his beard. A
crowd assembled, while the unfortu-
nate man danced with pain until a po-
liceman took him to a pharmacist's
shop, where his burns were treated.
An examination of the nose showed
that it was made of celluloid, the un-
scrupulous dealer who sold it having
foisted it on his client instead of the
horn nose which had been prescribed.
—New York Medical Journal.

An Up-to-Date Shave.
The antiseptic shaving saloon is the
latest achievement in hygienic sci-
ence, says Tit-Bits. The victim is
seated in an enameled iron chair, with
his neck and shoulders enveloped in
a rubber pad that has been dipped
in an antiseptic solution. Previously
the razor, soap dish and brush have
been sterilized by half an hour's hard
boiling. Nothing is allowed to touch
the face that has not been either
sterilized or disinfected antiseptically.
Even the finger tips of the operator
are dipped in a solution. Taps are
turned by the foot, and the drawers
where towels are kept are microbe-
proof.

PRI/ILEGES OF A HUSBAND.

Well Defined by Supreme Court of

Minnesota.
The Supreme Court of Minnesota has
decided that a man has a right to beat
his wife, in moderation, if he has
"good reason to believe that she has
been unfaithful." He needn't know
it, you know, so long as he believes it,
with good reason. If he finds subse-
quently that he was mistaken, and
that his reason, while good, was not
all sufficing, he is expected to apolo-
gize like a gentleman. The court
does not say this, but it doubtless as-
sumes that a gentleman would apolo-
gize for causing unnecessary pain and
mortification. Should he not apolo-
gize the lady is fairly entitled to a
complaint of cruelty, leading up to a
possible action for divorce. These ju-
dicial utterances make the law very
plain in Minnesota, and smooth the
way to complete understanding of
marital duties.—Roswell Field in Chi-
cago Evening Post.

In the House of the Prophet.

BY THOMAS BARGE.
(Copyright, 1902, by Daily Story Pub. Co.)
In the background among the shad-
ows behind the desk—a man of med-
ium size with white, luxuriant silken
beard and mane, thin of frame, albeit
somewhat wiry, with white anae-
mic skin, a marvellously shaped
head, showing great intellectuality
and dominant will power, albeit
strangely uneven; light-blue eyes into
which shot now and again the light-
ning flash of the eagle and the shifty
uncertainty of the lunatic—altogether
a most compelling personality. In the
foreground a woman bearing at once
the marks of refinement—those un-
mistakable evidences of "quality folk"
which never come except to those
possessed of birth and breeding; not
a strong face, however, the weak re-
treating chin and nervous mouth kill-
ing the effect of the high forehead,
which latter, truth be told, was a
trifle too bulging. She was well
dressed and her entire aspect be-
spoke a person well to do. Near the
door a burly man with burning, fanat-
ical eyes, stout jaw and heavy beard,
standing with arms folded across his
brawny chest, grim and menacing.

This was the inner sanctum of Dow-
furth, the self-announced Prophet and
reincarnation of the Deity—according
to his own claims and those of his
followers.
"I will willingly give all that is
fairly mine to the cause," the woman
was saying in pleading tones, "but
is it right to give up that which be-
longs to the boy? I have the legal
power, I know, but is it right?"
"Oh, thou of little faith," replied
the Prophet in deep solemn tones, at
which the woman shuddered and
bowed her head contritely, "how long
must thou go on stumbling in the
darkness? How long before thou ac-
quirest faith and walk in the light?"
Then raising his voice into a men-
acing key: "Would the chosen of God
give false advice?"

"Oh, no, no," she replied passion-
ately, "I do believe, I do, I do. But—"
"There are no 'buts' to the true be-
liever," the Prophet interrupted im-
peratively. "I see that thou art not
fit for communion with the elect.
Deacon, see that the sister leaves
Elysium at once. Her presence here
can only contaminate the elect."

"Verily, I hear," replied the heavy
man near the door, grimly moving
a step nearer the woman.
"Oh, no, no; not that," screamed
the woman, paling, "I will sign the
papers. I will do what you say. You
know what is for the best. Who am
I to set my judgment against yours?"
"Very well," replied the Prophet,
permitting no sign of triumph to come
into his voice, and extending a pen
toward the woman at the same time.
"But I fear a long course of training
will be necessary before you learn to
submit your strong and obstinate
worldly will to come into subjection
to the Holy commands."

Weeping silently the woman signed
her name to the paper, relinquishing
all her right and title in
the property left her by a
provident and trusting husband
for the maintenance of herself
and the curly-headed little boy who
bore the father's name. Silently the
burly figure near the door signed his
name as witness and the woman was
dismissed looking, with silent and
pathetic appeal, but in vain for a sign
of approval from the Prophet. His face
was set and stern. When the door
closed on her retreating figure, the
Deacon relaxed just a trifle to say:
"Blessed is the name of the Lord,"
responded the deacon piously "I



"Oh, no, no, no," she cried passion-
ately, "I do believe, I do—"

would speak with you about the wo-
man—McClellan—who has abode with
us for the past two months. I would
take her to wife, Most Holy One. She
is comely, and I am passing lonesome
since Jeannette passed to the other
shore."

The Prophet started and frowned
slightly. "It would stir up trouble,
Jonathan. She is married according
to the law of the land, and the out-
side world do not yet understand our
divine law."
"But she is married to an un-
believer and renounced all ties when
she became one of us. The infidel
husband shall never know. Verily out-
siders know naught of what happens
in Elysium."

Then raising his voice until there
was a suggestion of menace in it he
continued: "I have been a faithful
disciple, and if the rewards are not
for the elect who are to have them?
I do not question the stewardship of
the funds and the properties. It is
due that I should have some of the
joys of the world."

The two men looked into each

other's eyes a moment. Then the
Prophet said:

"It shall be as you wish. I will
speak to her this evening."

The door opened and there enter-
ed a thin, lanky man with a lanky
jaw and a scrawny growth of beard.
His eye was furtive and he seemed
to glide rather than walk.

"Well, Benjamin?" said the Prophet
interrogatively.

"It is about the girl, Rose," replied
the newcomer deprecatingly. "It
pleased your holiness to give her to
me to wife, and she will have none of
me, nor does her mother urge her as
she might. She has a goodly inheri-
tance. It should be kept in the fold."

"Summon the girl and her mother,"
commanded the Prophet to Jonathan.
Presently they came, a thin-faced,
shifty-eyed woman and a girl of rare
beauty just budding into young
womanhood.

"I hear that the girl is obstinate
and refuses to obey the will of the



Doubled him up like a jack-
Prophet," remarked Dowfurth sternly,
addressing the elder woman. "Listen;
unless you make her see the error of
her way all your sacrifices shall be
as nothing and you will be cast
of the fold."

"The woman trembled, and replied:
"I have told her she must. What
more can I do?"

"She is your daughter. You must
make her obey. To-night at nine
o'clock Elder Lanson will come to
your room for his bride. He will have
with him enough of the elders to as-
sure her obedience if you show the
proper authority. See that she is
arrayed for the bridegroom."

The girl wrung her hands in
pair. During the months she
resided in Elysium she had
enough to know how helpful
was.

"Oh, mamma, mamma; not
crawling place. Let us leave
terrible thing. Or you stay
me go. I can make my own
know I can. Let them have
heritance, but let me go."

Just at this moment the door
opened, and an ill-dressed, foolish
boy shuffled in with a pallor
in one hand and some clothes
in the other.

"Who is that, and what does
he?" exclaimed the Prophet, in-
gling.

"It is a new boy to do the
work. I took him in because he
was a believer in the faith. What
do you in here boy?"

"I was sent in to wash the win-
dows."

"You have made a mistake—not at
this hour. Get out."

Jonathan strode toward him to
eject him and the Prophet turned
toward the woman.

"It shall be as you say," she replied.
"The girl will be ready."

The girl threw herself on her knees
in a paroxysm of grief. "Oh, Harry,
Harry," she shrieked, "save me; save
me now or it will be too late."

And then a new kind of miracle
happened in Elysium. Jonathan
had just reached the boy and reach-
ed out his hand to eject him when
the lad lost his shuffling gait and
foolish looks, straightened up into an
athletic young man, and gave the
Elder a punch in the pit of his stom-
ach that doubled him up like a
jackknife, and followed it with a blow
under the chin that sent him rolling
to the floor in contortions. Quick
as a flash he let Elder Lanson have
one in the chest that caused him to
expectorate blood for many days.
Then seizing his pall of soapy water
he dashed it into the face of the
Prophet who had risen to give an
alarm. Then throwing open the win-
dow which opened onto the broad
verand: he exclaimed:

"Rose, Rose; now or never. Come."

With a startled cry of "Harry," she
sprang toward him, and they leaped
from the veranda and in a moment
were tearing out of the grounds sur-
rounding Elysium in the Prophet's
own carriage, which had been stand-
ing awaiting for him.

When the carriage and horses were
returned late that afternoon the burly
colored man who drove them carried
also a note to the Prophet. It read as
follows:

"Lest you should want to take any
action regarding the escapade of this
afternoon, I will give you my correct
name and address. Should you do
so, however, or make any sort of
trouble regarding the estate of my
wife, nee Rose Walker, I will be
pleased to meet you in a legal battle
that will go a great deal further than
you suspect."

"Harry L. Pearson,
Attorney-at-law,
"Room 114, No. 327 Fifth St."
There was no sign from the
Prophet and his followers.